

Remarks

Amendment

Claim 14 has been amended to state that each pocket is such that a piece of writing material can be inserted into and removed from the pocket. This limitation is supported, for example, by the description at page 5, lines 19 to 21.

Claim rejections under 35 USC 103

Claim 14

1. Claim 14 has been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Norberg (EP 126833 A) in view of Popat et al (US 5662976).
2. It appears to be agreed by the Examiner and the Applicant that Norberg discloses all of the features of claim 14 except that Norberg discloses a single continuous backing piece for the strip of pockets, whereas claim 14 defines a series of separate backing pieces each covering the self-adhesive back of a respective one of the pockets.
3. The Examiner has objected that it would have been obvious to modify Norberg to have separate backing pieces and has relied on Popat et al as suggesting such a modification.
4. The Applicant submits that the skilled person would not have any motivation for modifying Norberg so as to have separate backing pieces. As discussed in the Applicant's two previous responses, Norberg describes a rolled web of plastic pockets on a backing sheet of protective paper 18, and a machine for unrolling the web, for inserting dispatch notes or other communications into the pockets and for separating the plastic pockets from the protective paper 18. The protective paper is continuous. In the web of Norberg, it is primarily the protective paper 18 which holds the pockets together in the web, and it is the continuity of the protective paper 18 which enables the web to be drawn through the dispensing machine of Figure 2 and which enables the protective paper to be peeled away from the pockets.
5. If the protective paper 18 of Norberg were not continuous, but instead were provided by a separate piece for each pocket, it would then seem necessary, for each advance of the machine, (i) to attach some sort of device to the piece of paper under the pocket at the end of the web, (ii) to use the device to pull on that piece of paper to advance the web and also to separate the piece of paper from its pocket, (iii) to detach the piece of paper from the device, and (iv) then to move the device back ready for attachment to the piece of paper under the next pocket. The Applicant submits that such a modification

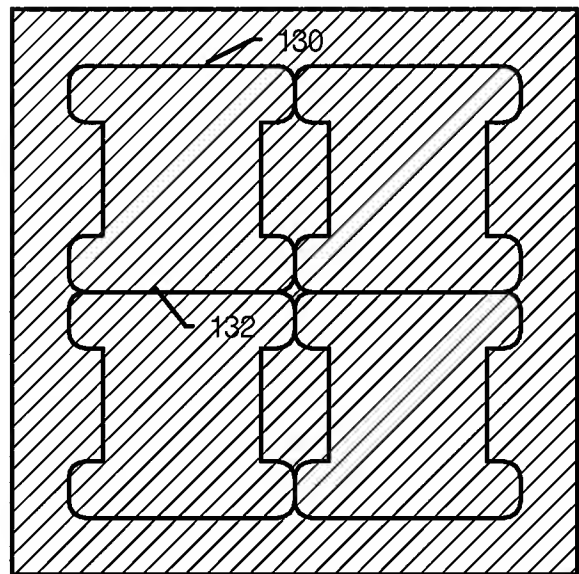
would be provide many disadvantages without any apparent advantages and is therefore not something that the skilled person would contemplate.

6. Even if the skilled person were motivated to modify Norberg, the Applicant submits that the skilled person would not look to Popat et al as providing any solution to any problem that the skilled person might perceive with Norberg. Norberg and the present invention and both concerned with pockets and with the attachment of a pocket to an article so that a piece of paper or card can be inserted into the pocket. By contrast, Popat et al is concerned with the satisfactory machine printing of an assembly of card or paper and a lamination layer so that the printed assembly can them be formed into a self-contained laminated card or a laminated index tab. The applicant submits that that is a different and unrelated art compared to the art of the present invention and Norberg.

7. Even if the skilled person were motivated to modify Norberg and looked to Popat et al to do so, the Applicant submits that the combination of Norberg and Popat et al would not result in the invention as claimed in claim 14.

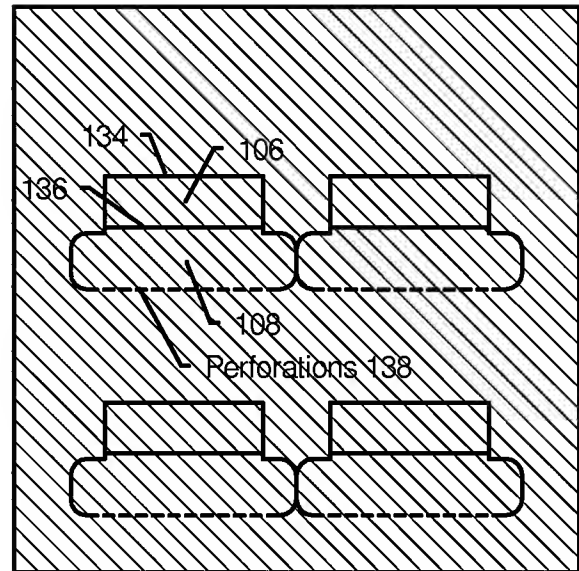
8. The Examiner has relied on column 11, lines 11 to 22 of Popat et al and the embodiment of Figures 8 to 13.

9. The Applicant's understanding of that embodiment (as applied to a 2 x 2 array in order to save space) is that the transparent film 112 and adhesive layer are die-cut as shown to the right.



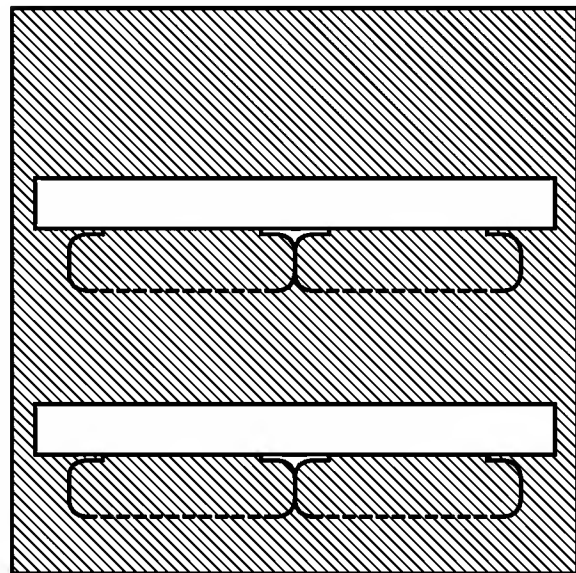
Transparent film 112 and adhesive layer 124

10. The card sheet 102 is die-cut and perforated as shown to the right. Importantly, the lower edge of each cardstock wing 108 is attached to the remainder of the card sheet 102 by a perforation line 138 (column 11, lines 30 to 32), rather than being die cut all the way around



Card sheet 102

11. The card sheet 102 has a release agent layer 126 which after die-cutting is as shown to the right. The release layer 126 has a special pattern such that the printing card portion 106 of the card sheet 102 is not provided with release agent (column 11, lines 2 to 5).



Release agent layer 126 on card sheet

12. Accordingly, when the card sheet 102 with its release layer 126 is assembled with the transparent film 112 with its adhesive layer 124, the printing card portions 106 become permanently attached to the transparent layer 112 (due to the lack of release agent 126) and are not easily removed therefrom (column 11, lines 6 and 7).

13. Therefore, referring to Figure 12 and column 11, lines 52 to 58 of Popat et al, each card/lamination set 144, after removal from the assembly, has a right half portion of transparent film with exposed adhesive 124. This was originally covered by a portion of the card sheet which remains attached to the card sheet. The far left portion of the card/lamination set is covered by the wing 108. The wing 108 can be peeled off to reveal the adhesive below. However, importantly, the wing 108 was not originally a separate piece; instead it was attached to the remainder of the card sheet 102 along the perforation line 138. The centre-left portion of the card/lamination set 144 bears the printing card portion 106. However, importantly, the printing card portion 106 is permanently attached to the transparent film and is not designed to be peeled off. Therefore, Popat et al does not disclose portions of the backing which are (i) provided each for a respective one of the sets 144, (ii) separate from the remainder of the backing and (iii) peelable.

14. Accordingly, if, which the Applicant refutes, the skilled person were to use a backing piece arrangement as disclosed in Popat et al for a strip of adhesive-backed pockets, it would not result in (i) the requirement of claim 14 of a series of separate backing pieces each covering the self-adhesive back of a respective one of the pockets, nor (ii) the requirement of claim 14 that each backing piece is peelable from the respective pocket to expose the self-adhesive back of the pocket.

15. In summary, therefore, the Applicant submits that (i) the skilled person would not have any motivation to modify Norberg in any way which would approach the invention of claim 14, (ii) even if the skilled person were so motivated, the skilled person would not turn to Popat et al for any relevant teaching, and (iii) even if the skilled person were to apply the teachings of Popat et al to the arrangement of Norberg, it would not result in the invention as claimed in claim 14.

Claim 15

16. Claim 15 has also been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Norberg in view of Popat et al.

17. Claim 15 is dependent on claim 14 and is therefore distinguished from Norberg in view of Popat et al at least by the features discussed above in relation to claim 14.

18. Furthermore, claim 15 includes the feature that each backing piece is a piece of writing material of a size such that it can be inserted without folding into the respective pocket. Norberg discloses pockets, but does not disclose that each backing piece is a piece of writing material, nor does it disclose the size of the pockets. Popat et al discloses backing pieces of writing material, but it does not disclose pockets into

which the pieces of writing material can be inserted and from which they can also be removed, as now required in view of the amendment to claim 14. Given that the relative sizes of the backing pieces of Popat et al and the pockets of Norberg are unknown, there is no suggestion from Norberg and Popat et al that the backing pieces of Popat et al should be insertable without folding into the pockets of Norberg.

Claims 16 and 18-21

19. Claims 16 and 18-21 have also been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Norberg (EP 126833 A) in view of Popat et al (US 6001209).

20. Claims 16 and 18-21 are dependent on, and within the scope of, claim 14 and therefore are distinguished from Norberg in view of Popat et al at least by the features discussed above in relation to claim 14.

Claim 17

21. Claim 17 has been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Norberg in view of Popat et al and further in view of Brady, Jr. (US 3896246).

22. Claim 17 is dependent on, and within the scope of, claim 14. Brady does not provide any teaching of the distinguishing feature of claim 14 as discussed above, and no suggestion has been made in the office action that Brady does. Accordingly, the Applicant submits that the invention of claim 17 is not obvious over Norberg in view of Popat et al and further in view of Brady at least for the reasons discussed above in relation to claim 14.

23. The Applicant believes that she has responded fully to all of the matters raised in the office action and that all of the claims of the application are allowable. A notice of allowance is therefore respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted

/ John V. Stewart #38627 /

John V Stewart, patent agent #38627
1308 Henry Balch Dr., Orlando FL 32810
407-629-5240, patents@jvsinventions.com